

FEARFUL DISASTER.

Shocking Calamity on the Reading Railroad.

A Passenger Train, Running at a High Rate of Speed, Dashes Into a Freight Wreck—Many Persons Killed and Injured.

READING, Pa., Sept. 20.—A wreck occurred on the Reading railroad seven miles above this place about 6:45 last night which resulted in a frightful disaster—the worst in the history of the Reading Railroad Company.

The train which met with the disaster left this city at 6:05 o'clock, ten minutes late. It was known as the Pottsville express and was running at the rate of at least thirty-eight to forty miles an hour. It had on board possibly 125 or 150 passengers and consisted of engine, tender, mail and express cars and three passenger coaches.

Above Shoemakersville, this county, about fifteen miles from this city, is a sharp curve, where the railroad is about eighteen to twenty feet higher than the Schuylkill river. Here shortly before six o'clock a freight train ran into a coal train, throwing several cars of the latter on the opposite track.

Before the train hands had time to go back to warn any approaching train of the danger the Pottsville express came around the curve and ran into the wrecked coal cars on its track. The engine went down the embankment into the river, followed by the entire train with its human freight.

Some of the passengers managed to crawl out of their prison and arouse the neighborhood. Word was telegraphed to this city and help summoned, but all information was refused at this point by the railroad officials. Physicians and surgeons and a force of 300 workmen were taken to the spot by the company and with the aid of a traveling electric light plant the work of clearing away the wreck was at once begun.

Up to midnight thirteen bodies had been recovered. Five bodies are exposed to view in the wreck. They are pinned under the timbers.

Conservative estimates place the number of killed at from forty to fifty. It is almost impossible to estimate the exact number and the full horror of the situation will not be known before morning.

At eleven o'clock Mail Agent Greenwald's body was taken out, followed by the horribly mangled bodies of two Mahanoy City firemen on their way home from the Chester convention.

The killed so far as identified are as follows: John L. Miller, of Cresson; William D. Shome, Reading, badly mangled; John White, engineer, Pottsville, Pa.; James Templin, Pottsville, Pa.; George R. Kaercher, Pottsville, Pa.; Harry Logan, conductor, Pottsville, Pa.; David Augstadt, Mahanoy City, died after being taken from the wreck. His head and body were crushed; E. W. Logan, baggage-master, Shenandoah.

George R. Kaercher, Esq., the eminent railroad lawyer of Pottsville, who has also a law office in Philadelphia, is among the killed. Persons who were well acquainted with him have identified the crushed body in the debris of the Pullman car.

William D. Shome, one of Reading's wealthiest citizens, was a passenger on the train and was one of the first persons reported killed.

RECOVERING THE DEAD.

READING, Pa., Sept. 20.—At two o'clock this morning the situation was as follows: Three hundred men were still at work, but were making slow progress. Fifteen bodies had been taken out. None of the bodies have been taken from the scene of the disaster.

It is still believed that twenty or more are underneath the wreck. Who they are is not known, because it is not known who was on the train, and how many were actually killed will only be disclosed with the removal of the engine and cars from the bed of the river.

STORY OF A SURVIVOR.

READING, Pa., Sept. 20.—One of the passengers who went down in the wreck and who was but slightly injured, and was one of the sixteen of the injured brought on a special train to the Reading hospital at eleven o'clock, says that when the passenger train left Reading the cars were all well filled. Among the people were many ladies. He sat in the front part of the last car. This is his story: "The train was going at a lively rate of speed. The passengers appeared a happy crowd, many of them ladies, chatting and laughing after a day's pleasure at the Berks County fair. I was viewing the country through which we were passing when suddenly there was a terrible crash. I was hurled from my seat, while the cars rolled down the twenty-foot embankment, and I was thrown from one side of the car to the other like a toy, when—splash, one end went into the water and I was thrown against the side of the car with a force that partially stunned me. I quickly recovered myself and managed to climb upon the seats on that side of the car which lay against the embankment. I was a prisoner in the car unable to get out, and while nursing my sprained ankle and wrist out of joint I realized that I was in a scene of veritable horror. Around and about me were human beings struggling in the water, screaming in their fright, and some almost dragged me back into the water again. A few saved themselves as I did and the remainder struggled in the water and then quietly sank out of sight."

ANOTHER COLLISION.

An Express Crashes Into an Excursion Train at Chicago—Five Persons Killed and Several Injured—Three Trainmen Killed Near Council Bluffs.

CHICAGO, Sept. 22.—At eight o'clock last night an express train on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad ran into the rear of an excursion train on the Illinois Central road near Eighteenth street, causing a terrible wreck.

The collision took place near Douglas park, the victims being Sunday excursionists just reaching the city on their way home from an afternoon's outing.

The dead are: Lily Diener, aged twenty-three; Martha Diener, aged twenty-one; Otto Schloeff, aged seventeen; two men, identity unknown.

The fatally hurt are: Lena Riswig, aged seventeen; Minnie Pilgrim, aged nineteen; Eddie Thorpe, aged sixteen. In addition to these were the following injured: Tillie Burke, left shoulder broken; Henry Lutz, leg fractured; C. H. Niemann, right leg broken and left arm crushed; Charles Melrose, arm broken.

A number of others received cuts and bruises, but were able to go home without assistance.

During the day the Illinois Central road had run an excursion to the orphan asylum at Addison, and it was this train, while "blocked" on the outskirts of the city and waiting to be released, which was crashed into by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy suburban. Engineer Dickson, of the Burlington train, claims that the rear red lights of the Illinois Central train were burning so dimly as to afford him no warning of their presence. Other reports have it that the Burlington train was behind time and was running at a reckless speed.

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy engine lost her pilot, headlight and smokestack and her front head was stove in, while her tender was forced up against the boiler's head. Neither Engineer Dickson nor his firemen were injured, both jumping off when it appeared inevitable that the train could not be stopped.

The excursion train consisted of fifteen cars, every one filled with people. The express train consisted of an engine, baggage car and six passenger coaches with about 100 people on board. Conductor Carrington, Engineer Dickson and a brakeman were arrested, but no statement could be obtained further than the assertion of Engineer Dickson that he saw no red lights until he was upon the excursion train.

THREE TRAINMEN KILLED.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa, Sept. 22.—On the Omaha & St. Louis railroad, about seven miles south of this city, between 2:25 and 2:30 o'clock yesterday morning, a northbound freight train with eighteen loaded cars from St. Louis broke through a trestle work fifty feet high and was wrecked and three trainmen killed.

When the train ran on the east end of the trestle the engineer saw that the west end was on fire, signaled for brakes, reversed the throttle of the engine and dropped sand on the rails, but as the train was running at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour it struck the burning timber. Then there was a crash and the entire train went through to the bottom of the gulch. The trestle work was 300 feet long and the train went through about fifty feet from the west end. Twelve cars were destroyed. The killed are: Martin Eskridge, engineer, of Stanberry, Mo.; Joseph Burke, fireman, of Stanberry, Mo.; R. S. Williams, head brakeman, Macon, Mo. Eskridge was crushed to death under his engine and was burned to a handful of ashes and bits of bone.

ONE COLLISION CAUSES ANOTHER.

CONNELLVILLE, Pa., Sept. 22.—An east-bound freight on the Baltimore & Ohio road, five miles from here, was dashed into from the rear by a fast time freight running at the rate of forty miles an hour, demolishing the engine and caboose. The engine of the wrecked train was sent for assistance, and while returning, through a flagman's carelessness, was run into by the wrecking train near the scene of the first collision. James Shields, the engineer, was killed, and his fireman, Harry Cuppers, badly injured internally, while John Reynolds, fireman of the wrecking train, was badly cut and scalded. Several others suffered minor injuries, while the wreck completely blocked travel.

SOMETHING LIKE A SYSTEM.

Enormous Extension of the Santa Fe Railway.

TOPEKA, Kan., Sept. 21.—A prominent Santa Fe official confirms the report of the purchase of the Colorado Midland, or at least a controlling interest in it, and the securing of an option on the Rio Grande & Western. He adds important information to the New York dispatch. He asserts that the Santa Fe management has concluded arrangements for the lease of the Baltimore & Ohio, and also has secured control of the Central Pacific with all its San Francisco terminal facilities, thus having a continuous line from ocean to ocean. The same official declares that negotiations are also now pending looking to the control of the Queen & Crescent line in the South. He says that within four weeks the Santa Fe will have absolute control of these lines.

It will take \$3,000,000 to swing the Colorado Midland and Rio Grande Western deals. This move will cut the Rio Grande out of its Ogden and Pacific coast connections. The Rio Grande Junction railroad, which is owned jointly by the Rio Grande, Rio Grande Western and Midland, will, by the deal, pass into the hands of the Santa Fe, and the interest of the first named road will now become useless.

FURIOUS FLOODS.

Hot Springs, Ark., and a Considerable Extent of Country Damaged—Floods in China and France.

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Sept. 24.—A terrible flood has visited this town and the valley from one end to the other in ruins.

A heavy rain set in Monday afternoon and at midnight the rain increased steadily until there came a terrible waterspout.

This together with the immense volume of water which rolled down the mountain side swelled the creek at the base out of its banks and deluged the main thoroughfare and flooded the stores the whole length of the avenue.

The water with its terrible force carried every movable object before it and the avenue presented a scene not better than that after the great flood in Hot Springs of two years ago.

THE CHINA FLOODS.

WASHINGTON, September 24.—The Department of State has received from the United States legation at Peking, China, a report relative to the recent heavy floods in that country. The recent floods have been the most serious ever known. It is supposed that an area of 3,000 miles and a population of several millions were affected by them. Many people have been drowned and tens of thousands are refugees from their homes, living on charity.

One result of the floods, the report says, may have far reaching consequences. Near Lutai, which is a point on the railroad from Tongkiu to Tongshan, the railway embankment has been destroyed by the people for several miles. It was alleged that the embankment dammed up the water and flooded the country. Forcible possession was taken of the embankment, which was cut in many places, the trains were stopped and the employees driven away. It is supposed that the General in command at Lutai either instigated or connived at these proceedings in which his soldiers largely took part. A very serious feature of the case is the supineness of the Viceroy Li. He has done nothing to prevent these lawless proceedings.

The Tongshan colliery is stopped and 3,000 men are thrown out of employment and the operation of the railroad is, of course, suspended. This destruction was wanton and unnecessary for letting off the water. All these proceedings indicate an anti-railroad excitement, which may result in postponing indefinitely any further railroad enterprises in China.

THE FRENCH FLOODS.

PARIS, Sept. 24.—The floods in the department of Gard have caused much damage. Sunday, the river Rhone rose nineteen feet, and the town of Beaucaire was flooded.

At Valleraugue, on the Herault, thirty-nine miles northwest of Nimes, the river undermined part of a cemetery. A number of coffins were washed out, and, together with their contents, floated down the river.

The Ardeche river is greatly swollen. At Aubednieke the town and surrounding country were flooded. Several houses were undermined by the waters and fell, and the vineyards throughout the district were devastated. Three persons were killed.

The Avignon and Caderousse districts along the Rhone in the D department of Van Cluse are submerged and the workshops and factories have been closed.

It is announced that President Carnot will visit the flooded districts. The Chamber of Deputies will be asked to grant relief for the sufferers.

A GREAT FIRE.

Colon Devastated by Flames—Looters Suppressed by the Military—The Loss Very Heavy.

PANAMA, Sept. 24.—Three-fourths of Colon has been destroyed by a fire which broke out at midnight and was not under control until seven a. m.

Owing to the riotous behavior of a mob of looters, the military opened fire with ball cartridges, killing and wounding several persons. Reinforcements of police have been dispatched from here. A supply of food has also been sent. Every thing is reported quiet now.

The fire commenced shortly after midnight. It originated in the back part of the store of Rathoun & Praise on Bolivar and Fifth streets, near the electric light company's building, which was entirely destroyed. From the start to the time when it burned itself out near the market, the fire consumed immense quantities of alcohol, spirits, petroleum and other inflammable materials and was entirely beyond human control.

Without interruption the flames sprang up in three directions—southerly through Bolivar and Front streets, sweeping away every business place, store and private residence in the way; westerly through Fifth street to the Royal Mail premises, Panama railway and general superintendent's offices, leaving nothing but the walls of the latter, and northerly to Fourth street. In all about 150 buildings were destroyed, including the post-office, Supreme Court, alcaidia, municipality prefecture, the agencies of all the steamship companies except the French company, the Pacific Mail and Royal Mail offices and part of the wharf, every business house of importance on Front street and all the hotels.

The total loss is estimated at \$1,500,000. The loss of the Panama Railroad alone is calculated at \$100,000. The cause of the fire has not yet been ascertained. Only a few of the principal business firms were partly insured. About 100 cars of freight in the railroad yards were consumed.

THE SUGAR SCHEDULES.

Congress May Be Deceived—An Expert's Opinion.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23.—Henry A. Brown, the noted ex-Treasury Department sugar expert, has sent the following letter, embodying a vigorous protest against the Tariff bill sugar schedule, to Senator Aldrich and the Tariff bill conferees:

HON. N. B. ALDRICH and Members of the Tariff Conference Committee in Congress: SAXONVILLE, Mass., Sept. 19, 1899.—The provisions of the sugar schedule of the Tariff bill as the bill came from the House and as it now stands with Senate amendments, is a complete surrender of the people's interests to foreign producers and sugar refiners and is already boasted of as such by them.

The remedy is in your hands. Admitting all sugars not above 16 or not above thirteen Dutch standard in color free of duty without restrictions again opens the doors to coloration frauds, which were scotched, not killed, by the bill of March, 1898, after six years of constant fighting by this writer. It is not a question but a certainty that all sugars not above 16 Dutch standard will be imported for refiners, and if the line is 13 Dutch standard all foreign sugar producers will color their sugars to evade the duty. Only bastard yellow sugars, if any, are likely to come in refined below 16 Dutch standard, and even these can not compete with the high grade centrifugals that will come in free of duty to refiners, who can then produce yellow refined and undersell foreign refined yellows. There will be no sugars imported that are not below 16 or 13 Dutch standard in color, as under the new schedule the old coloration frauds will be renewed in full force and be protected by law.

There should be a proviso something as follows: Provided all sugar not above No. 13, or 16 (whichever line was adopted) Dutch standard in color, testing above 89 degrees in the polariscope, shall pay a duty of three tenths of a cent per pound, and two hundredths of a cent per pound additional for every degree or fraction of a degree above 80 degrees. By some such proviso the Government can maintain control over importations of sugar and protect the interests of the people. Without some such proviso the bounty plan will prove a farce, and consumers will be at the mercy of foreign producers and refiners of sugar. The proviso will also afford some protection to molasses boilers.

The time for disposing of the 1890-91 crop of domestic sugar before the bill goes into effect should be extended to May 1, 1899, in justice to producers of sugar in this country, who are entitled to the protection of the present tariff to that extent at least.

A BAD MAN SHOT.

The Sudden Ending of the Career of a Chicago Adventurer—Shot By His Wife's Brother.

CHICAGO, Sept. 23.—Several years ago, Alfred Richner, the husband of a noted brothel keeper, succeeded in clandestinely working himself into the good graces of the daughter of a wealthy flour and feed dealer named Kessler. Upon Kessler's death, the daughter, who seems somewhat simple-minded, disclosed her attachment for Richner. The instant opposition of the family to any recognition resulted in the prompt elopement of the couple to Montreal.

Richner later went through the form of obtaining a divorce from the brothel keeper and having his marriage with Miss Kessler legalized. They returned to Chicago and a feud was soon engendered between Richner and his new wife's brother. The latter accused Richner of being actuated solely with a desire to lay hands on the fortune of the sister. Legal struggles and personal encounters between Richner and young Kessler have been frequent, the latest prior to last evening being in a court room, where Richner, apparently to put the brother-in-law in a ridiculous light, emptied a small sack of flour on his head.

Recently, it is said, Richner failing in his efforts to get at the Kessler money, threatened to kill every member of the family. Last night he met young Kessler on State street and attacked him with a cane. Kessler drew a revolver and rapidly fired three shots. Two were stopped by Richner's watch. At the third he dropped and Kessler immediately put two more bullets into his sister's husband while the latter was prostrate.

Kessler gave himself up to the authorities. Richner, the doctor says, can survive but a few hours.

TIME EXTENDED.

The President Extends the Time For Cattlemen to Vacate the Cherokee Strip.

CRESSON SPRINGS, Pa., Sept. 20.—The President has issued the following proclamation:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Whereas, It has been represented to me that by reason of the drought, which has prevailed in the Indian Territory and in the adjoining States, the execution of my proclamation of February 17, 1899, requiring the removal of all live-stock from the Cherokee Outlet on or before October 1, would work great hardship and loss not only to the owners of stock herded upon the strip, but to the owners of cattle in the adjoining States; and

Whereas, The owners of all cattle now herded upon the Outlet having submitted to me a proposition in writing whereby they agree to remove one-half of their stock from the Outlet on or before November 1, and the residue thereof and all of their property and employees on or before December 1 next, and to abandon all claims in said Outlet;

Now, therefore, I, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, do give notice and proclaim that the time heretofore fixed for the removal of live-stock herded upon said Outlet is extended to November 1 as to one-half thereof and to December 1 next, as to the residue thereof and as to all property and employees.

Mrs. Fremont's Distress.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Sept. 23.—Mrs. Jessie Benton Fremont, widow of the late General John C. Fremont, is quite sick at her residence, on Twenty-third street, in this city. To a reporter, who called at the residence last night to inquire after Mrs. Fremont's condition, her daughter stated that the family are in very straitened circumstances, that there is not a dollar in the house, and they are on the verge of actual destitution.

THE ODD FELLOWS.

Action of the Sovereign Grand Lodge—Daughters of Rebekah Get a Set Back—The Late Grand Sire Overruled.

TOPEKA, Kan., Sept. 20.—The first annual convention of the Order of Rebekah will be its last.

When the sovereign grand lodge of Odd Fellows met yesterday the petition of the Rebekahs for a continuance was given a special hearing and by a practically unanimous vote a substitute was agreed upon which will do away with national conventions.

Mrs. Rea, the president, said of this action: "My only hope is that the representatives who voted against us will not be elected to attend another grand lodge meeting."

The amendment to the constitution in regard to the eligibility of saloon keepers was voted down by an overwhelming majority. This came up on the case appealed from the Missouri grand lodge which took action refusing saloon keepers admission on the ground that their business was not moral.

The judiciary committee submitted its reports on the cases of Grand Master Barnum, of Illinois, and Captain General Ellis, of the Patriarchs Militant. In the Barnum case the committee overruled the grand sire and in the Ellis case confirmed his ruling. The grand lodge will act on both reports to-day.

The degree of chivalry was conferred on Mrs. Rea by the sovereign grand lodge and the Daughters of Rebekah gave her a handsome diamond ornament emblematic of the order. But the jewel and the honor does not compensate for the chagrin she feels at the action of the grand lodge.

The finding in the Barnum case was a great victory for the Illinois grand master. He was peremptorily deposed from office by Grand Sire Underwood for remonstrating with the latter in regard to one of his decisions. Barnum had revoked the charter of a Chicago lodge because it had refused to comply with one of his orders. The lodge appealed to the grand sire and the charter was restored. Then the grand sire removed Barnum from office. The judiciary committee held that a grand master was supreme in his jurisdiction and that all complaints must pass through his hands to the grand lodge.

Captain-General Ellis, of the Patriarchs Militant, by virtue of the decision, is suspended from office. October 5 last he issued an order declaring himself lieutenant-general and generalissimo of the Patriarchs Militant by virtue of a decision of the grand lodge limiting the office of lieutenant-general to three years and providing for a successor. Grand Sire Underwood revoked the order and suspended Ellis.

All of the amendments which were proposed to the constitution were voted down. It is not likely that any changes whatever will be made.

THE KIMBERLY TERROR.

Details By Mail of the Escape of Menagerie Wild Animals.

LONDON, Sept. 20.—Advices from Kimberly, South Africa, the center of the diamond fields, state that at midnight June 1 last some person, evidently one bearing ill-feeling toward Tillie's menagerie, opened the doors of the cages confining the wild animals and set them all free.

Four attendants sleeping on the premises were mangled beyond recognition, being actually torn limb from limb. The entire population within a radius of a mile was aroused by the roaring of the lions, the trumpeting of the elephants and the groans and shrieks of the other wild beasts.

Four big male lions, named Pasha, Abdul, Caliph and Mustapha, sprang from their cages and made for the stables, where Pasha leaped upon the back of Murat, the great jumping stallion and buried his teeth in the animal's neck. The screams of the horse aroused the attendants, a Scotchman named Patterson and three Kaffir boys, who, armed with stable forks, rushed to the relief of Murat and endeavored to beat Pasha back, but were attacked from behind by three other lions and one cheetah, thrown to the ground and dragged off. Their bodies were mangled and torn open, their bones smashed into bits and the heads of all except one of the Kaffirs were mashed. This Kaffir had his legs torn off, but lived long enough to tell the story. His body was covered with lacerations.

Having tasted blood the lions, cheetahs, wolves and leopards regained all their natural ferocity and sprang at every living thing that came in their way. Four performing Hungarian horses were killed almost instantly, among which was the equine beauty, Black Bess, and a number of ponies were devoured.

An enormous elephant, known as Blood, burst through the heavy iron gate in his fright and rushed into Curry street, followed by nearly every animal in the menagerie.

A cabman named Nelson was sitting on his carriage before the building and sprang for a post that supports an awning around Glover's athletic bar, while the horses dashed madly down the Dutoits Fraue road closely pursued by two lions and four wolves. The rest of the wild animals scattered in every direction.

A little child of James Grinley, happening to be in a room opening in a garden, was pounced upon by a cheetah and dragged into the open air, where its agonized mother saw it torn to pieces and devoured before help could reach it. Other harrowing incidents are reported, among them the killing of five women.